overlap at all. Magic was wielded by men to gain power over spirits, persons, elements, and forces. It had either social or personal benefits. The role of highest social benefit, corresponding to the liang dī in women, was the khwan-specialist (mǭ khwan) who conducted the life-cycle, khwan-strengthening (tham khwan) (for persons and for the rice) and many other ceremonies for the mature khwan. This role demanded men of the highest qualifications in probity, erudition, and personal dedication. Men also had the formulae for curing, house- or boat-blessing, invoking guardian spirits (sān phrs phūm), etc. Men could make protective amulets to render the wearers safe from bullets, knives, spirits, and all sorts of hostile forces in the world.

On the other hand men's magical objectives could be aggressive and hostile. The gamut of amulets, missiles, love-oil, and incantations (Textor:passim) showed the potential for attack and why the converse need for invulnerability was so strong. Men had a nurturing (liang) role, but only for non-human beings, e.g. buffalo, pet birds, and guardian spirits of house and land. Subverting this role for hostile ends, they obtained possession of the ghost of a recent corpse by gathering the drop of oil at the chin, and nourishing it (liang) for use in sorcery. For a man, nourishing something gave control.

All of the powers of men's magic were available to women on request for any purpose, hostile or not, but the "owner" had to be the mediating agent.

A woman's magical knowledge was linked exclusively to her female task. It did not give power over people. It could not be destructive. No female sorceress existed in Bang Chan. No woman feared the magic of another woman in childbirth nor at any time. A woman's magic was devoted solely to promoting the processes of growth and life. Thus it controlled the searing heat of the fire, invoked the Spirits of the 4 elements, and helped at various points in childbirth. It handled the soul of the Rice Goddess and of Mother Sū, guardian of children. It restored any frail and wandering khwan to its proper bodily abode. Such was a woman's magic.

To insure separateness the respective provinces of magical activity were ringed with sanctions. Contact with a woman's skirt, undergarments, or menstrual blood completely negated any of a man's protective amulets (re tattooing, cf. Textor: 102). Though this reflected the traditional avoidance between sexual phenomena and Buddhism, it might also indicate a tacit moral evaluation of the magical powers of men and women: the powers for growth were ultimately ascendant over those for power, for men had nothing that undid a woman's powers. Though women were easily prey to men's magical control, as by